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Muskogee



621 532 view this singular figure; but I am assured by several of the traders who have frequently seen it, that the carving is modest, and very neatly finished, not unworthy of a modern civilized artist." [11]

•[302] According to some informants the people of each tálwa formerly had distinctive face paintings, and there were men in every town particularly skilled in applying these. The design for Tuskegee was as shown in the cut (fig. 102).

[344]

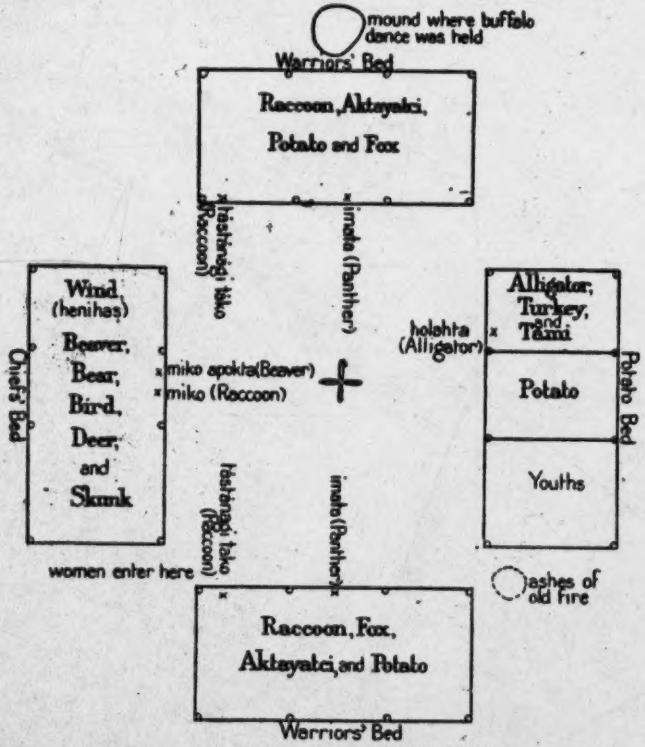


FIG. 47.—Plan of the Tukabahchee Square Ground (III)

621 A word may be quoted from Stiggins regarding the feeling of unity which subsisted within each town.

"The towns people were frequently assembled at their town house or square in order to keep them united, for the harmony subsisting among the people of a town is noted and seems to be cemented by an affection as strong towards each other as the sons of Jacob of old in their association. As the usages and customs of every town are similar and the men all know the unity and sympathy of a town

[11] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 22-23.

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"the best speaker in the town." The two offices may sometimes have been combined, but it is evident that they were usually distinct.

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In Tukabahchee and all of those towns of which the ancient organization has been preserved, either in the memories of the Indians or in fact, there were three general classes of war officials. The highest were the tástánágálgi, the next in rank the imala łáká'lgi, or "big imalas," and the third the imala łábotskálgi or "little imalas." At Tukabahchee, and probably in the greater number of towns, the tástánágis sat at the western end of the north bed, but, as I have shown elsewhere, their position varied, and sometimes the tástánágis and imalas were seated in different beds. The Tukabahchee arrangement is given by Hawkins as that in Kasihta in his time. He does not indeed give the Indian names of the various grades of warriors but he states that there were three of them and that promotion was regular from lowest to highest. In most towns the tástánágis and imalas received their positions on account of warlike feats, not because of ancestry or clan connection. One of my informants said that a tástánágí was a man who "carried out the determinations of the town." The leader of the tástánágis was usually known as the tástánágí łáko, "big warrior," and Hawkins states that he was selected from among the tástánágis by the miko and isti átcagágí.[36] According to the same writer the highest title to which a warrior could aspire was that of "Great Leader" (Is-te-puc-cau-chau thlucco [isti pákatca łáko]), which required "a long course of years and great and numerous successes in war." The head warrior of Tukabahchee was known as the Tástánágí simiabaiya.[36] He was privileged to call the whole town together. According to a Coweta informant, in his town the tástánágis were elected by the head men of the town from the Red clans, but, although it is probable that, on account of the theory regarding them, more warriors would arise from the Red than from the White clans, they were certainly not drawn exclusively from such clans. These officials all had to do with war and with the ball game which is called "the brother of the war." War, while decided upon in council, was announced by the Big Warrior. According to a Coweta informant ball games were arranged by the Big Warriors of the towns concerned, each taking such assistants as he desired, but in Kasihta there was a special official, the halísi tástánágí, who attended to such matters. The Tástánágis were also the native police, the Big Warrior being "chief of police"; they carried out the decisions of the miko and the isti átcagágis, and they punished any one who

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FIG. 102.—Face painting used by the Tuskegee Indians. The spots in solid black represent red; the cross-hatched spots green

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[36] Hawkins in Ga. Hist. Soc. Colls., vol. III, p. 78.

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disposition—and this in spite of the almost universal classification of the Bear as a peace clan. Further evidence of degeneration is shown in some of the Seminole towns in Oklahoma where a singe tástánâgi has usurped the functions of both the chief's heniha and the miko apokta.

At Tukabahchee, and probably the other principal Creek towns as well, the isti átcagâgi, the tástánâgis, and some of the other classes bore names which were passed on to their successors, and hence amounted to titles. In fact the war names owned by each clan were thus passed on and were therefore rather titles than true names. Since these titles were conferred under state auspices the persons bearing them might be regarded as officials and from that fact possessed of a share in its government. The government of a Creek town or little state, for such it really was, is thus seen to have rested on bodies of men owing their positions partly to descent and partly to recognized prowess in war. When it was in its prime it is probable that merit vastly overbalanced, the isti átcagâgis, tástánâgis, imalas, and tásikayas having owed their positions mainly, at least, to individual accomplishments. Although the mikâgi and henihâlgi had to do with peace mainly, they had gone through with the war discipline and had been selected from among the warriors. While they must always belong to certain clans they were, beyond that restriction, elective, and, as these clans were usually numerous, a considerable choice could be exercised. While it is true that the legislative and executive power was vested in a small number of people these were persons who had, for the most part, worked their way up by their talents and bravery, and were really representative of the native ideals of what was highest and most worthy. A power of recall was also exercised in the case of the chief and it is probable that we should find that the same power existed in effect over the other offices. A separation of governmental functions had begun in some particulars, the henihas being a kind of Department of the Interior concerned with the pursuits of peace, and the various classes of warriors, particularly the tástánâgis, a department concerned with war, and also constituting an internal police.

Speck is the only authority for the use of face paintings to mark differences in rank. He says:

"Facial painting was employed to indicate rank in the town. Persons bearing the title of *míko* or *hiníha* wore black paint on one side of the face and red on the other, coloring either the whole face or only the space around the eyes. The second pattern belonged to ordinary initiated men having the title *taskáya* and consisted of four stripes, from the cheek-bone to the angle of the jaw, alternating in red and yellow." [2]

[2] Speck in Mem. Am. Anthrop. Assn., vol. II, p. 114.

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554 •302 It happens that the very town, Tuskegee, from which Speck derived this information, was the one where I learned about face paintings used to distinguish citizens of different towns.[47] Possibly, therefore, this data contains a reference to some custom not clearly remembered. As we shall see when we come to treat of war customs, the design said to be worn by a Tuskegee miko was almost identical with that assumed by members of a war party, while war honors, which of course carried rank with them, were perpetuated by means of tattooings.[48]

623 Regarding the town council Hawkins has the following to say:

"The Micco, counsellors [i. e., isti átcagágí] and warriors meet every day, in the public square; sit and drink a-cee, a strong decoction of the cassine yupon, called by the traders, black drink; talk of news, the public and domestic concerns, smoke their pipes, and play Thla-chal-litch-cau, (roll the bullet.)[49] Here all complaints are introduced, attended to, and redressed. They have a regular ceremony for making, as well as delivering the ă-cee, to all who attend the square."[50]

These meetings began early in the morning. Elsewhere we learn that the care of the ási was the prerogative of the henihálgi.[51] Zachariah Cook states that the ási was merely taken into the mouth, not swallowed, but this represents the institution in its decline. At an earlier day it was swallowed, but ejected afterwards. The leading men sometimes counselled on the open square and sometimes in the big house, in the latter especially on matters requiring secrecy. From thence, at the time of the busk, instructions were sent out for the clans or clan groups to gather in councils and these were held at different places about the grounds. The clan councils have been referred to in discussing the clan system. At the great council of the town leaders and at the smaller councils lectures on conduct were delivered, the doings of the preceding year reviewed, and future prospects outlined. Each clan council was usually presided over by the oldest pawa, or "uncle," belonging to it, or at any rate the one most esteemed, and he lectured the members of his clan in the same way. If any of the younger members of this clan had deserved a reprimand he would deliver it, and he was often requested so to do.

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619 631 642 In a previous discussion of the evolution of the Creek confederacy the important part played by the towns of Kasihta and Coweta has been pointed out, and their social significance as leaders of two sets of towns whose relations were governed by certain laws, or, rather, precedents. The towns drawn into the confederation were also divided in another way, viz, geographically, into two groups which

[47] See p. 346.
[48] See p. 436.
[49] The game described on pp. 469–470.
[50] Hawkins in Ga. Hist. Soc. Colls., vol. III, p. 71.
[51] See p. 393.

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When they have eaten and drank together, they return home by sun-rise, and thus finish their solemn Yah-ah.

"Although a widow is bound, by a strict penal law, to mourn the death of her husband for the space of three or four years; yet, if she be known to lament her loss with a sincere heart, for the space of a year, and her circumstances of living are so strait as to need a change of her station—and the elder brother of her deceased husband lies with her, she is thereby exempted from the law of mourning, has a liberty to tie up her hair, anoint and paint herself. . . .

"The warm-constitutioned young widows keep their eye so intent on this mild beneficent law, that they frequently treat their elder brother-in-law with spirituous liquors till they intoxicate them, and thereby decoy them to make free, and so put themselves out of the reach of the mortifying law. If they are disappointed, as it sometimes happens, they fall on the men, calling them *Hoobuk Wakse*, or *Skoobále, Hassé kroopha*, 'Eunuchus præputio detecto, et pene brevi;' the most degrading of epithets." [301]

A class of prostitutes existed among the southern Indians, composed of those who had committed adultery and had been cast off by their husbands, and those who for any other reason had become outcasts. Such women are said to have been the only ones to paint their faces. It was among them that many of the temporary marriages already spoken of were contracted.

It is hard to explain where Milfort got the idea that a Chickasaw widow was buried alive with her husband, for which there is not the slightest evidence outside of his own testimony.[302] It is not impossible, however, that he derived it in some manner from the ancient Natchez custom which applied only to widows of members of the nobility or Suns. Some color is lent to this suggestion by the fact that the Natchez and Chickasaw were more or less mixed together in the Chickasaw country and among the Upper Creeks. But neither with the Natchez were widows buried *alive;* they were first strangled.

### DIVISION OF LABOR BETWEEN THE SEXES

Jackson Lewis, one of my oldest and best informants, said, "In ancient times men and women were almost like two distinct peoples." In fact the old habitations usually comprised two or more buildings in one of which the woman spent most of her time while her husband occupied the other and entertained there his male friends. To the present day this division is kept up in one form or another. Sometimes there are two small buildings with an open porch between; sometimes two rooms end to end with open fireplaces at the opposite ends. In Plate 7, *a*, is shown a typical Seminole house in Oklahoma

[300] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 186-190. [301] Milfort, Mém., p. 282.

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721 country was engaged in fighting her, and of more recent dealings of the same kind. It shows also how the customs of a people react inevitably upon themselves for good or for evil.

642 721 In the case of the confederacies above mentioned the very abolition of war between certain units increased the power of the aggregate body and at the same time their temptation to use this advantage in the exploitation of their less well-organized neighbors. And in the Creek confederacy, for instance, while its very existence depended on the fact that certain tribes had agreed to live without fighting, social advancement and the whole structure of the state was dependent on war to such a degree that a complete account of the institution involves an almost complete account of the Creek social system. This having already been given, we are now in a position to take up more particularly the method of waging war.

[302]

FIG. 103.—Head of a Creek warrior. (After Romans)

726 The Creek warrior fought almost naked. He wore, of course, the breechclout and belt, also a pair of moccasins. His face and the upper part of his body were painted red and black. He carried a pack in which were an old blanket, some parched ground corn, cords, and leather with which to repair his moccasins. His weapons consisted [41] in earlier times of a bow and arrows, a knife and a tomahawk hanging at the side, and a war club stuck through his belt. Adair mentions a javelin which would be a short spear or throwing knife.[95] In later times the bow and arrow gave place to the gun, though the former were used along with the latter as late as Adair's time. The war club (átasa) was, however, the principal symbol of the institution. Stiggins describes it as "shaped like a small gun about 2 feet long, and at the curve near where the lock would be is a thin square piece of iron or steel with a sharp edge drove in to leave a projection of about 2 inches."[96] It is remembered at the present day as an implement like a combined hatchet and knife, which could either be retained in the hand or thrown. One form of headdress of a Creek warrior is shown in the accompanying illustration, taken from the work of Romans (fig. 103).

721 Intertribal warfare among the southern Indians was suppressed so long ago that not much is remembered regarding it. In this

[95] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 398. [96] Stiggins, Ms. Hist. Narr., p. 35.

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726 302 Red and black are well known as war colors down to the present day. Milfort states that the Creeks painted their bodies all over when going to war[49] but my own informants mentioned only the face and breast. Half of the face is said to have been painted red and half black, the first for war and the warpath, the second for the death that was to be dealt at the end of the warpath. Before being applied these paints were conjured in the usual Creek manner—i. e., the medicine man repeated a formula over them and blew into them through a reed. Mr. Grayson has told me that during the Civil War, when the Creeks enlisted in the Confederate army were about to go into action, the Indian doctor who was with them, who was in fact my informant Jackson Lewis, smeared a mixture of red paint and charcoal upon the cheeks and breasts of the Indians, and made a sign like a cross upon them. This last may have been an idea borrowed from Catholic priests. The red paint and charcoal were evidently a survival of the red and black paints of olden times. After the fight he made them bathe in a creek, and then drink some water and throw it up again.

726 789 Besides the feathers already mentioned I am told that the crow feather was anciently the great feather among the Creeks used principally in war. It probably signified death, but it was conjured over when a party was on the warpath in order to put the enemy into a sound sleep. To conteract this influence the feathers of the blue jay were used. Eagle and sparrow-hawk feathers might be employed in war, but the principal is said to have been the crow feather as mentioned above. The feathers of the white crane signified peace. A formula or song, known as ina hĭta, was sung by a warrior just before he went into battle. This was to preserve him from harm.

701 Jackson Lewis asserted that war leaders were taken only from men who had passed through the period of training described in the section on education, which was undertaken in periods of from 4 to 12 days and involved the acquirement of numerous incantations and medical practices.[49a] They could not, however, be graduates of White clans, and it is evident that they must also be men who had attained distinction in previous warlike enterprises. From the same authority I also obtained the following account of Creek war officers.

The highest of these officers, the one who had particular charge of the war interests of the town, was called hobayi mi'ko, "far-away-chief," and he is probably identical with the man usually known as tåstånågi låko. He was the man who declared war. Next in command was the hobayutci, "little-far-away." Third came the tåstånåk hobayi, "far-away-warrior," fourth the tåstånåkutci, "little warrior," fifth the lihomāhti or "trailer," and sixth the lĭhomahtūtci, or "little trailer." These two last were

[49] Milfort, Mém., pp. 33-34.

[49a] See p. 367 and also pp. 617-620 in the second paper of this volume.

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535 Poko imobánga, "the ball dance." (I presume this was danced in connection with the ball games.)

My most complete list was from the Alabama in Texas and was as follows:

Tcitcoba bitka, "the horse dance."
Nita bitka, "the bear dance."
Yanasa bitka, "the bison dance."
Kono bitka, "the skunk dance."
Tcoskáni bitka, "the duck dance."
Tcola bitka, "the fox dance."
Tcintcuba bitka, "the alligator dance."
Kitini bitka, "the horned-owl dance."
Ófolō bitka, "the screech-owl dance."
Akága bitka, "the chicken dance."
Tcofkoni bitka, "the bone dance."
Wokaskila bitka, "the tree-frog dance."
Łálo bitka, "the fish dance."
Isbák tokolo bitka, "the double-headed dance."
Páspa bitka, "the bread dance."
Sátáne bitka, "the wood-tick dance."
Sinte bitka, "the snake dance."
Sátá bitka, "the terrapin dance."
Okadjibándja bitka, "the parroquet (?) dance."
Itibitilga bitka, "the war dance."
Oktcál'ā bitka, "the blackbird dance."
Kowegi bitka, "the quail dance."
Tcukfi bitka, "the rabbit dance."
Tcokce bitka, "the pumpkin dance" (a very old dance).
Itéheci bitka, "the friends' dance."
Pátka bitka, "the bed dance."
Bitka atcōba, "the old dance."
Taske bitka, "the scalp dance."
Akita bitka, "the ākita dance."
Kinia bitka, "the kinia dance."

The aged chief of the Mikasuki knew of the horse, chicken, quail, skunk, old man's, duck, garfish, alligator, terrapin, crow, corn, hair, and chigoe dances, the last four of which do not occur in the other lists. David Cummings knew of cow and wolf dances, and Zach Cook of leaf and hináta dances. My most complete account of the native dances being from the Alabama, the following descriptions will be based upon them.

535 When they dressed for the dances the Alabama men frequently
●302 painted a large red spot on each cheek and a red line down the nose. The women put a smaller red spot on each cheek and omitted the line. Occasionally yellow was used instead of red, and in the times of which my informant had any remembrance the paints were obtained from stores. Charcoal was used to blacken the upper lip.

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535 [302]

These colors were for appearance only; they had no religious or other significance. The silver crowns and the pouches hung at the side and fastened by straps over the opposite shoulder were worn only at dances, except that the last were taken when traveling or going to town. New buckskin leggings were also worn at dances, but the handkerchief turbans were worn all of the time. The silver gorgets were generally assumed only for dances, but occasionally old ones were carried about at all times. While the hair was always made into four braids the beaded ornaments at the ends were for festivals or when the owner was going to town.

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Two of these dances, the horned-owl dance and the snake dance, were never performed by the Alabama in June, July, or August, because in both they followed a serpentine course like that of a snake and people feared that those reptiles would be offended with them and bite them. The horned-owl dance is said to have been danced only in September. Every night, after these dances were over, the participants put their feet up to the fire so that the snakes could not see to bite them, and they warmed their hands and rubbed their eyes with them so that they themselves could see the snakes easily and would not step on them. The snake dance was danced a long time ago. All that I can add regarding it is Jackson Lewis's statement that it was danced entirely by women, and an implication on the part of Swan that the leader of this dance carried a wooden snake in his hands, but what Lewis said does not seem to be in agreement with what my Alabama informant had heard.

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The horned-owl dance was evidently a greater favorite and was danced more frequently, and it was connected with those feasts to which reference has already been made. To summon people to this dance a man went around on horseback—sometimes accompanied by a second—carrying in his hands a peculiar baton. This was made of a cane about 12 feet long, at the outer end of which was a hoop made of hickory, white oak, or some other suitable wood. About five deer tails, and sometimes a loaf of bread, were fastened to this. Bearing it, he visited every house to make the announcement.

The horned-owl dance was always in September. There was no drummer but one old man walked about perhaps 10 feet from the fire shaking a rattle and singing, while the men and women danced around the fire inside sinistrally. The rattler was also song leader; the men sang with him but the women did not sing. There was no definite order in which the men and women danced, except that one man did not immediately follow another. Each man held a handkerchief by one corner and a woman following held the opposite corner of the handkerchief. If another woman, or other women, danced beside her, they held her by the elbows. The dancers were